

STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

SECURITY THREATS TO CANADA'S 44th ELECTIONS – UPDATE #7

This assessment is intended to provide situational awareness of domestic security-related threats to Canada's 44th general elections. The information in this assessment is based on reporting from the RCMP Combined Intelligence Group, law enforcement partners, searches against RCMP holdings, and open source resources (Information current as of 19 September, 2021, 1500hrs). The IMCIT continues to maintain visibility on emerging threats and will provide updates as required.

KEY POINTS

- Threats directed towards Protected Persons continue, with the Prime Minister (PM) remaining the primary target.
- It is likely that polling stations throughout Canada will experience disruptions on election day due to a number of factors which includes long wait times at polling stations and the enforcement of rules related to COVID-19 exposure.
- Canadian "World Wide Rally For Freedom" events on 18 September, 2021 that included anti-vaccine, anti-lockdown and anti-mask narratives were peaceful.
- Regardless of the election outcome, protests related to anti-vaccine, anti-lockdown and anti-mask topics will continue and the potential exists for future public order events to include new narratives based on the perception of election fraud and increased hostility towards protected persons.

PURPOSE

To provide an overview of the current domestic threat environment related to Canada's 44th general elections, as of 19 September, 2021.

THREATS TO PROTECTED PERSONS

Threats to Protected Persons continue. In the last 72 hours, a number of incidents have occurred:

- On 17 September, 2021, posts on Twitter s.37 and Instagram were reported for containing violent comments and indirect threats toward the PM.¹

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Federal Policing National Intelligence – Ideologically Motivated Criminal Intelligence Team (IMCIT)

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- On 16 September, 2021, an individual called the Library of Parliament and made several threats towards the PM and other Members of Parliament and threatened to attack Parliament. The individual also spoke of conspiracy theories.²

The RCMP continues to track and assess all such threats and engages with applicable security and law enforcement partners as required.

THREATS TO THE POLLING STATIONS

The IMCIT currently does not possess any information that suggests individuals are overtly advocating for violence on election day. However, a post was made to a Canadian pro-gun Facebook page on 19 September with the title "Election day scene", which included a meme of what appears to be a female in costume carrying a gun with the caption, "Heading to the polls with a firearm - because I do".³ The IMCIT has identified that the image of the female, absent the specific election caption, had been posted in years previously, typically in relation to discussions about Israel.⁴

Given the number of incidents that occurred between 10 to 13 September at advanced polling stations, the potential exists for polling disruptions throughout Canada on election day.^{s.37}

s.37

Long wait times at polling stations due to public health and safety measures, a decrease in the number of polling stations,⁵ as well as the enforcement of rules related to COVID-19 exposure⁶ could result in agitated individuals. It is anticipated that the RCMP and applicable Police of Jurisdiction will receive a surge in calls for assistance on election day.

PUBLIC ORDER EVENTS

Over the past week, social media chatter in networks previously dedicated to circulating information related to Liberal campaign protest events has focused on rallies planned for the remainder of September which are anti-vaccine, anti-lockdown and anti-mask in nature. The IMCIT assesses that, regardless of the election outcome, protests related to these topics will continue. The implementation of vaccine passports in several Canadian provinces, ongoing public health measures and the topic of mandated vaccinations remain trending issues within Canada.

It is important to note that public order events related to these topics pre-date the federal election. They have occurred on a weekly basis since April 2020 in multiple Canadian cities and have generally been peaceful in nature, with the exception of an event in Montreal on 11 April, 2021 which resulted in vandalism and arrests. Several Canadian cities took part in "World Wide Rally For Freedom" events on 18 September, 2021 which were peaceful in nature. Based on open source information, signage with

conspiratorial^{7 8} and sovereign themes⁹ were present at some of the protests, however. The screen capture examples below were taken from Twitter. ^{a b}



Open source information also suggest that individuals associated with White Lives Matter (WLM) attended the Freedom rally event in Toronto¹⁰ after holding a previously planned monthly WLM rally earlier in the day.^c Several social media pages that were involved in promoting protests aimed at Liberal campaign events posted comments indicating a perception that mainstream media coverage failed to report on these protests entirely or downplayed attendance.

This is fueling existing narratives in these networks that the mainstream media is corrupt, controlled, and fails to tell the truth. While some of the protests on 18 September, 2021 included the presence of conspiracy signage and ideologically motivated individuals, there were also individuals present who appear to have attended for a variety of other personal grievances which are not ideological in nature.

At the Freedom rally event in Calgary, media reporting indicates that People's Party of Canada (PPC) leader Maxime BERNIER was in attendance, although the event itself was labelled as non-political.¹¹ BERNIER was quoted as saying *"(There's) a real freedom revolution in this country, because we know when tyranny becomes law, revolution becomes our duty."* This statement is a slightly modified version of a slogan that has often been used by Three Percenter groups internationally.¹² Despite being criticized previously for using this phrase, a PPC spokesperson advised that the leader was not aware of the group or their slogans.¹³ BERNIER also indicated while at the event that, after the election, he intends to be with protesters in the street to fight for freedoms.¹⁴ It is possible this rhetoric could be perceived as an endorsement by BERNIER which could lead to sustained protests of this nature after the election, regardless of the outcome.

^a unifythepeople.ca self-describes as a grassroots movement of likeminded sovereigns with a mission to *"write constitutions for each province and territory in Canada in order to form lawful republics that will free us from the tyranny of corrupt governments"*. <https://unifythepeople.ca>

^b The Great Reset, as viewed by conspiracy theorists, asserts that COVID-19 was created to foster conditions that would allow a restructuring of world government and economic systems resulting in a totalitarian regime to implement global socialism and enslave much of the planet. <https://www.dailydot.com/debug/great-reset-conspiracy-theory/>

^c "White Lives Matter" (WLM) public order events have been advertised internationally since March of 2021, with events in Canada confined to Toronto with 5 or less attendees. IMCIT reports on WLM and other national public order activity in a monthly RCMP National Threat Landscape Strategic Assessment.

The IMCIT assesses that the potential exists for future public order events to occur that include new narratives based around the perception of election fraud. These types of events will likely attract ideologically motivated individuals^d who have promoted conspiracy theories throughout the pandemic and the election period. However, as COVID-19 continues to impact daily life, events of this nature also have the potential to attract individuals who are not aligned with any specific ideology or group, but who have experienced personal hardships due to COVID-19 and are upset with provincial or federal government responses.

There has also been an increase in chatter on social media suggesting law enforcement and other first responders are supportive of and, at times, participating in the anti-vaccine, anti-lockdown and anti-mask protests. During the pandemic, there have been a number of individuals communicating on social media and speaking at protests who claim to be first responders.

Since the announcement of mandated vaccinations for certain employment sectors, some cities in Canada have also seen protests claiming to be organized by first responders in opposition to vaccine mandates.^{15 16} It is unknown at this time, whether the vocal individuals who have identified themselves as law enforcement are active officers or if they are retired, on leave, etc.

Prior to the election, protests in Canada generally remained peaceful, with altercations or hostilities typically directed at opposing groups. During the election period, there has been a significant increase in hostility displayed at some protests, as well as in online rhetoric, particularly towards the target of protest. It is possible that, at future speaking events, Protected Persons may be met with an escalated threat environment.

SOCIAL MEDIA - THE PAST 72HRS

An open source post on Gab^e called for scrutineers^f for the PPC on election day, citing concern for the potential of election fraud.¹⁷ The screen capture at right was taken from Gab.

While scrutineers are part of the electoral process for all parties, it should be noted that this particular post was made on a Gab group page which is anti-Liberal in nature.



^d The presence of ideologically motivated individuals does not necessarily mean ideologically motivated criminality or ideologically motivated violence. The non-criminal ideologically motivated space includes expressions of racism, bigotry, misogyny, and individuals engaging in lawful protests.

^e Gab is a social media platform that promotes free speech. It is popular within the racially and ethno-nationalist motivated threat landscape due to lax platform moderation that allows content typically removed from other mainstream platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

^f A scrutineer is appointed to represent a candidate at a poll, observe the electoral process and the counting of ballots after polls close and official results are tallied.

<https://www.elections.on.ca/content/dam/NGW/sitecontent/2017/politicalentities/A%20Guide%20for%20Scrutineers.pdf>

The group page also consists of conspiratorial content, including suggestions that the pandemic is fake and is being used for depopulation through communist control.¹⁸

Additional open source information related to potential election fraud references recent PPC events which have drawn large crowds.¹⁹ The screen capture at right is taken from Twitter.

The RCMP continues to track and assess public order and public safety threats and engages with applicable security and law enforcement partners as required.



Distribution List

RCMP, s.37 [REDACTED] Panel of Five

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¹ RCMP Holdings

² RCMP Holdings

³ September 19, 2021 email from Elections Canada Security Incident Coordination Centre

⁴ <https://www.buzzfeed.com/eylonalevy/44-totally-crazy-onlyinIsrael-moments-27hoc>

⁵ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/voting-longer-federal-election-monday-challenges-elections-canada-1.6176110>

⁶ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/health/voting-covid-isolation-1.6175446>

⁷ <https://twitter.com/YYCantiracist/status/1439465260163817474/photo/2>

⁸ <https://twitter.com/weynagrom/status/1439260711868239872/photo/3>

⁹ Personal Info. [REDACTED]

¹⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/PatriotGusCanada/posts/262169352436408>

¹¹ <https://calgaryherald.com/news/politics/maxime-bernier-speaks-at-anti-vax-calgary-freedom-rally-attended-by-more-than-1000>

¹² <https://calgaryherald.com/news/politics/maxime-bernier-speaks-at-anti-vax-calgary-freedom-rally-attended-by-more-than-1000>

¹³ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/bernier-peoples-party-three-percenters-1.6168880>

¹⁴ <https://calgaryherald.com/news/politics/maxime-bernier-speaks-at-anti-vax-calgary-freedom-rally-attended-by-more-than-1000>

¹⁵ <https://globalnews.ca/news/8186655/covid-vaccine-mandate-toronto-emergency-workers/>

¹⁶ <https://calgary.ctvnews.ca/calgary-frontline-workers-first-responders-rally-against-vaccine-mandates-and-public-health-restrictions-1.5582601>

¹⁷ <https://gab.com/Edventure/posts/106938575643558956>

¹⁸ <https://gab.com/sdarnold/posts/106904046384424485>

¹⁹ <https://twitter.com/keepontruckin78/status/1438767683265126401>